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A39 A49 INCOMING TELEGRAM S/S MC R

PAGE 01 LA PAZ 05915 042006Z 3726
ACTION ARA-16

INFO OCT-00 COPY-01 ADS-00 INR-10 SS-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00
H-01 IO-15 NSC-01 NSAE-00 H-02 L-03 CIAE-00
TRSE-00 PM-09 PA-01 ONDB-01 EB-08 DES-00 JUS-01
SP 02 SPRS-02 /096 W

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R 041839Z OCT 82
FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
TO USIA WASHDC 0624
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 3302
DEA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY QUITO

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USIS

USIA FOR FGM/D DON MATHIS, D; AR DEA FOR OFR (HEATH)

E O 12356: NA
TAGS: NA
SUBJ: PUBLIC AFFAIRS ASPECTS OF COCAINE TRAFFICKING IN BOLIVIA

REF: USIA 47904; LA PAZ 5632, 5570, 5569, 5400 2477, 0426, 81 LA PAZ 6161, 5565

1. BOLIVIAN COCAINE TRAFFICKERS ARE ACTIVELY SEEKING PUBLIC SUPPORT TO MAINTAIN IF NOT AUGMENT THEIR ALREADY STRONG INFLUENCE WITHIN THIS COUNTRY'S POWER STRUCTURE. SITUATION HAS BECOME SO SERIOUS THAT DR ARMANDO CANELAS, PRINCIPAL ADVISOR TO BOLIVIA'S NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING, WARNS THAT "BOLIVIA IS ON THE POINT OF BECOMING DOMINATED BY A CONSORTIATE OF COCAINE TRAFFICKERS, MUCH AS WE WERE DOMINATED BY THE TIN BARONS BEFORE 1952."

2. MISINFORMATION AND DISINFORMATION ABOUT THE COCAINE TRAFFIC ARE BEING SPREAD THROUGHOUT BOLIVIA. THE TRAFFICKERS AND THEIR ALLIES HAVE BECOME YET BOLDER IN RECENT DAYS AND HAVE MOUNTED A CONCENTRATED MEDIA CAMPAIGN TO DISCREDIT ANTI-NARCOTICS PROGRAMS AND TO LAY THE BLAME FOR THE DRUG TRADE AT THE DOORSTEP OF THE UNITED STATES.

3. WE ARE SEEING A CAMPAIGN OF HYSTERIA WHIPPED UP ABOUT THE USE OF HERBICIDES TO KILL COCA PLANTS, THE APPEARANCE OF FRONT ORGANIZATIONS DEDICATED TO DEFENSE OF COCA, AND CALLS FOR BOLIVIA TO "BLACKMAIL" THE UNITED STATES INTO MAKING MASSIVE PAYMENTS IN RETURN FOR COCA CONTROL. ACCUSED DRUG KING ROBERTO SUAREZ GOMEZ, STILL AT LARGE IN THIS COUNTRY, HAS BEGUN A MEDIA CAMPAIGN TO PORTRAY HIMSELF AS A PATRIOTIC BOLIVIAN, AND TO PICTURE HIS SON, NOW IN CUSTODY IN MIAMI, AS INNOCENT VICTIM OF PERSECUTION. ON SEPTEMBER 3, BOLIVIAN NATIONAL TELEVISION GAVE PRIME TIME TO A FIFTY MINUTE PROPAGANDA PIECE DEFENDING THE COCAINE TRAFFIC. THIS PROGRAM SKILFULLY CAPITALIZED UPON BOLIVIAN MISPERCEPTIONS AND CONCERNS, SKILLFULLY BLENDING HALF-TRUTHS, LIES, AND OUTRIGHT LIES. IT HAD RECEIVED CONSIDERABLE PUBLIC ACCLAIM AND DISINFORMATION GIVEN CREDENCE BY A LARGE PERCENTAGE OF THE POPULATION.

4. POST HAS MONITORED WITH CONCERN ANTI-NARCOTICS EFFORTS HAVE INCLUDED PROMINENT [illegible] CERTIFICATES OF [illegible] VIP [illegible] ON TELEVISION, AND PLACEMENT OF [illegible]

5. ALTHOUGH THESE EFFORTS HAVE HAD SOME EFFECT, WE LACK EFFECTIVE TOOLS TO CONTINUE TO BE EFFECTIVE IN DEALING WITH THIS MAJOR ISSUE, ONE WHICH IMPACTS UPON PRACTICALLY EVERYTHING ELSE IN OUR COUNTRY PLAN, AND SUBSTANTIALLY DEGRADES OUR RELATIONS WITH BOLIVIA.

6. WE NEED INFORMATION ON THE CHARACTERISTICS AND EFFECTS OF HERBICIDES AND THEIR USE IN THE UNITED STATES, DATA ON DRUG USE AND ITS EFFECTS, REPORTS TO BACK UP ANY CLAIMS WE MIGHT MAKE ABOUT SUCCESSES IN THE DRUG WAR, ARRESTS OF MAJOR ARRESTS OF MAJOR TRAFFICKERS, MATERIALS ABOUT THE SOUTH FLORIDA TASK FORCE AND SIMILAR ACTIVITIES, STORIES ABOUT THE NARCOTICS NETWORK AND HOW IT OPERATES, CASE HISTORIES OF HOW COUNTRIES SUCH AS TURKEY, THAILAND AND MEXICO HAVE DEALT WITH NARCOTICS PRODUCTION AND TRAFFICKING. SUCH SUCCESS STORIES WOULD HELP OVERCOME COMMON PERCEPTION THAT DRUG TRAFFICKERS ARE SO POWERFUL THAT IT WOULD BE FUTILE TO TRY TO COMBAT THEM. WE NEED MATERIALS TO HELP US DEMONSTRATE THAT THE NARCOTICS TRAFFIC IS DOING GRAVE DAMAGE TO THE ECONOMIES AND CULTURES OF PRODUCER COUNTRIES.

7. WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE SLIPPAGE IN PROCESSING OUR COCA FILM PRINTS. ORIGINAL ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE WAS AUG 23, THIS HAS DROPPED TO OCT 2, ACCORDING TO REFTEL USIA 47904. WE ARE ANXIOUS TO OBTAIN THE AIRPART DESCRIBED IN REFTEL LA PAZ LOU 5400 AND TO MOVE FORWARD WITH THE BOLIVIAN BOOK ON COCA AND COCAINE DESCRIBED REFTEL LA PAZ LOU 5569. WE NOTE THE SHORTAGE OF USEFUL WIRELESS FILE MATERIALS.

8. OPERATIONS MEMORANDUM MORE FULLY DESCRIBING POST ACTIVITIES, REQUESTS AND SUGGESTIONS WILL FOLLOW. STAN SHEPARD TO DRAFTING. MEYER

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY E B Rudd DATE 1/26/83
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